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Daily Highlights

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THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

◆ Security Council Members meet to finalize draft text of Summit Declaration to be issued at Friday's high-level Council meeting.

◆ Secretary-General meets with Libyan Ambassador to reiterate request that Libya comply with Security Council resolution 731 on two downed aircraft.

◆ World population expected to double by the middle of 21st century - reaching 11.6 billion, according to recent United Nations projections.

◆ Special Committee against Apartheid expresses concern at continuing violence in South Africa, and also calls on European Community not to lift sanctions against South Africa, so as to keep reform process on track.

◆ Human Rights Commission, meeting in Geneva, begins discussion of right of self-determination; European Community representative expresses concern about growing intolerance in Europe.

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Following what Council President Sir David Hannay called a lengthy "drafting exercise" yesterday, the Members of the Security Council met again today to discuss the wording of the Summit Declaration to be issued at tomorrow's high-level meeting.

While declining to give details of the draft text, which he said would cover three general themes, the Council President assured correspondents that the talks yesterday had proceeded "perfectly well".

He said that he had all the material needed so that the text could be redrafted to include points made yesterday by Council Members, adding that after today's consultations Members would be able to recommend the draft to their Heads of Governments.

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The Secretary-General met this morning with the Permanent Representative of Libya, Ali El-Houderi, and reiterated his request that the Libyan authorities comply with the terms of Security Council resolution 731 (1992), which calls on them to cooperate fully in establishing responsibility for the downing of two aircraft, Pan Am flight 103 and UTA flight 772.

Ambassador El-Houderi said he would go to Tripoli immediately to deliver the message in person, and would return to New York early next week.

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The population of the world is expected to double by the middle of the 21st century, from 5.3 billion to 11.6 billion people, and to stabilize ultimately shortly after the year 2200. This is one of the findings in the recently issued United Nations report entitled Long Range Population Projections: Two Centuries of Population Growth, 1950-2150. The report, prepared by the Population Division of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, provides long-range projections of population size.

The growth of the world population is projected in the medium-fertility extension to slow gradually thereafter, with increases of 89 per cent between the years 1990 and 2050 (to 10 billion), 12 per cent between 2050 and 2100 (to 11.2 billion) and 3 per cent between 2100 and 2150 (to 11.5 billion). In this extension, the population of the world ultimately reaches 11.6 billion before stabilizing.

The world's future population growth will be dramatically concentrated in today's less developed regions, according to the report. Africa has been and will continue to be the fastest growing area, with its population stabilizing - according to the medium-fertility extension - at 3.2 billion people, nearly five times its 1990 size.

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In a statement by the Acting Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid, Guennadi I. Oudovenko of the Ukraine, the members of the Committee today expressed their increased concern at the continuing violence occurring in South Africa. The recent incidents in that country, according to the statement, appear to have been perpetrated by those opposed to the peaceful transformation of South African society.

The Special Committee calls on the South African authorities to take "firm action against members of the police and security forces who do not conform to establish norms in the maintenance of peace" and to ensure that there is no return to the era of arbitrary political arrest and detention of anti-apartheid activists.

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The Special Committee further reiterated its full support for the peaceful process which has been initiated in South Africa. Only through a peaceful and democratic political process, encompassing all parties and all points of view, will South Africa be able to emerge as a new society guaranteeing peace and justice for all its citizens, concludes the statement.

In another statement, also made public today, the Special Committee against Apartheid says that it considers that the decision taken by the European Community to lift the measures it imposed against South Africa in 1986 "weakens the leverage of the international community in promoting the ongoing process in South Africa through appropriate pressure".

The members of the Committee therefore call on the Member States of the European Community "to continue to exert appropriate pressure on the South African authorities to ensure that the ongoing political process remains on track".

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The Commission on Human Rights, meeting in Geneva, yesterday began discussions on the inalienable right of peoples to self-determination and its application to peoples under colonial and alien domination or foreign occupation.

Under this item, which was introduced by Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights, Jan Martenson, the Commission expects to consider a report on the question of the use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination.

Also in a statement yesterday, the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Portugal, Duarte Ivo Cruz, addressing the Commission on behalf of the European Community, noted increased concern on the part of its members at the growing sentiments of intolerance and xenophobia manifested in Europe. However, he welcomed positive trends towards democratization which were to be seen in parts of Eastern Europe, Latin America and Africa.

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